

The University of Chicago

EUROPEAN DIPLOMACY IN THE
BALKAN PENINSULA
AUGUST 10, 1913—JUNE 28, 1914

A PART OF A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF THE DIVISION OF THE
SOCIAL SCIENCES IN CANDIDACY FOR THE
DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

1936

By
MARGARETA FAISSLER

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INTRODUCTION

The train of events through which the crisis of July, 1914, led to the Great War is explained in part by the diplomacy of the Great Powers in the Balkans from the signing of the Peace of Bucharest, August 10, 1913, to the assassination of the heir to the Austrian throne, June 28, 1914. During those months the world conflict was hastened by changes in the relations of the alliance groups to each other and by the multiplying of the external difficulties of Austria-Hungary until she was willing to embark upon a policy of desperation.

For hundreds of years the great states of Europe had been involved in the problems of the Near East. The dismemberment of European Turkey had been in progress for more than a century. To a considerable extent the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire was the result of increasing national consciousness among the Balkan peoples themselves. It was facilitated and given general European importance by the repeated intervention of the Great Powers, each of whom hoped to further its own selfish interests.

The great states most nearly concerned with the Balkan peninsula were Austria-Hungary and Russia. The heterogeneous population of Austria-Hungary included large numbers of South Slavs and Rumanians. Like all the subject peoples of the Monarchy, they were excluded from any effective share in the government. The South Slavs were particularly restive under the autocratic rule of the dominant German and Magyar races, and they interested themselves in Serbian propaganda for the creation of a great South Slav state. Since Serbia promoted this irredentist movement by various methods, it was natural that bitter antagonism developed between Austria and Serbia which ultimately became the basic factor in all Austrian diplomacy in the Balkans. Russia, as the greatest Slav state, was interested in the cause of pan-Slavism. This sentiment she intended, of course, to use for her own purposes, one of the foremost of which was the plan to open the Straits to Russian ships of war.

The other Powers all had some lesser stake in the Balkan

peninsula. Italy, for her part, wished to control the Adriatic Sea from which she desired to exclude Austrian, Serbian, and Greek influence. France and Germany were interested in the Ottoman Empire because of their investments. France was the chief creditor of Turkey and also a political rival of Italy in the eastern Mediterranean. Germany was building the Bagdad Railway directly across the Turkish domain. Great Britain participated in the solution of Balkan questions only when some situation arose which threatened the control of her route to India or of her eastern Mediterranean trade, or which threatened to break the concert of Europe.

At the beginning of the period under consideration, five independent Balkan states had come into existence. Rumania, with her Hohenzollern monarch, King Carol, was associated with Germany, Austria, and Italy in the Triple Alliance. Greece, whose king was the brother-in-law of the German emperor, often tended to be sympathetic toward Germany. Serbia and Montenegro were the avowed friends of Russia. Originally Bulgaria had also been a protégé of Russia, but by this time the devious policy of her German ruler, Ferdinand, made her future course uncertain.

The collapse of European Turkey was brought about by the Balkan Wars of 1912-1913. In October, 1912, a league of Balkan states including Serbia, Bulgaria, Greece, and Montenegro, but unaided by Rumania, attacked Turkey. The league had originally been sponsored by Russia, whose diplomatic representatives had helped to overcome the violent hostilities among the Balkan states; but neither Russia nor any other Power desired the war.

The allies immediately overran most of the European parts of the Ottoman Empire except for Constantinople itself. Italy and Austria were alarmed because it appeared possible that Serbia and Greece would remain in occupation of Albania. Austrian and Italian threats and protests, to which were added those of Germany, made it impossible, however, for Russia to support the Serbian demand for an outlet to the sea. The whole Albanian question was finally considered by a conference of the ambassadors of the Great Powers accredited to London, which determined to erect a new independent principality of Albania. To this decision the Balkan allies acceded. The Treaty of London, May 30, 1913, which put an end to the First Balkan War, intrusted the determination of the boundaries and government of the new state to the Great Powers.

The First Balkan War left two problems which led almost at once to a second war. As recompense for her neutrality in the first war, Rumania demanded a part of the Dobrudja which had remained in the hands of Bulgaria after the Congress of Berlin in 1878. The question was arbitrated by a conference of Great Powers. The Triple Alliance wanted Rumania to be given all she asked for; but Russia, France, and England, who were associated in the Triple Entente, refused to permit so great an increase in Rumanian territory. A very small boundary rectification was finally granted. Rumanian statesmen blamed Austria for the failure to make greater reductions in Bulgarian territory, and they continued their hostility to Bulgaria. The second problem concerned the division of spoils among the Balkan states. The treaties on which the Balkan league was based had included no exact plan for the allocation of the territories to be taken from Turkey, and the creation of Albania from land which Serbia expected to acquire had still further complicated the situation. Deprived of her outlet to the sea, Serbia attempted to indemnify herself from areas claimed by Bulgaria; but Bulgaria refused to satisfy the demands of Serbia.

So bitter were the differences among the allies that on June 29, 1913, the Second Balkan War was precipitated by an attack from the Bulgarian army on Serbian and Greek troops. Russia was thoroughly displeased by this war, for it disrupted her league. The attitude of Austria was undecided. Because of her antagonism to Serbia, she would have welcomed the war could a Bulgarian victory have been assured; but under the existing circumstances she feared that Bulgaria would be defeated. Bulgaria was at once overwhelmed; for Rumania promptly joined Serbia and Greece, and Turkey used the opportunity to recover Adrianople. Alarmed by Serbian success, Austria was only prevented by the opposition of Germany and Italy from presenting Serbia with an ultimatum. Bulgaria was immediately forced to sue for peace, which was signed at Bucharest on August 10, 1913. Of her conquests in the First Balkan War, Bulgaria was allowed to keep only a narrow outlet on the Aegean. The port of Kavalla was given to Greece. Macedonia was divided between Serbia and Greece. Rumania gained a generous slice of the Dobrudja. Meantime Turkish armies still held Adrianople. Bulgaria had emerged from the war embittered and determined on revenge, while Serbia, Greece, and Rumania were

equally determined to permit no changes in the Peace of Bucharest.

The Balkan Wars also changed the position of the Great Powers, especially of Austria and Russia, in the Near East. Austria had on the whole lost prestige because of the expansion of Serbia and the partial alienation of Rumania. She had, it is true, gained a potential ally in Albania, but Albania could only serve as a barrier against Serbia if Austria, Germany, and Italy could work in concert to give vitality to the little state. Germany, however, had no direct interest in Albania, and Italy and Austria were bitter rivals for the control of the new principality. In Bulgaria alone was the Monarchy stronger. With the decline of Austrian influence in the Balkans, that of Russia was automatically strengthened and the defeat of the German-trained Turkish army in the Balkan Wars made Russia more hopeful of being able eventually to attack the Straits.

Such was the state of affairs in southeastern Europe at the beginning of August, 1913. It is the purpose of this dissertation to study the diplomacy of the eleven months following the signing of the peace. There were three questions which arose in the Balkans during that period. In the first place many problems resulting from the Balkan Wars had to be dealt with, for the Peace of Bucharest by no means solved all of them. In the second place both of the great alliance groups attempted to alter the balance of power, each to its own advantage, by drawing to itself Balkan allies. Both Russia and Austria, in their antagonism to each other, needed friends among the Balkan states, and from August, 1913, to July, 1914, they were jockeying for position in the Balkans. During these months, there also occurred the more spectacular incident of the mission of General Liman von Sanders which led to a crisis between Russia and Germany. It was with these three problems - the liquidating of the Balkan Wars, the Sanders mission, and the Balkan balance of power - that the Great Powers were concerned in the period covered by this study.

LIQUIDATING THE BALKAN WARS

The first question arising directly from the Balkan Wars concerned the Peace of Bucharest itself. Austria had hoped to build up a strong Bulgaria which would be led by gratitude to support Austria against Serbia. It was apparent, however, before the treaty was negotiated, that its terms would be favorable to Serbia. For that reason, during the period when the peace conference was sitting at Bucharest, Berchtold, the Austro-Hungarian foreign minister, attempted to persuade the Powers to declare that they reserved the right to revise the treaty at some future time no matter what its provisions were. He hoped later to be able to alter whatever decisions the conference might make so that Kavalla, which the negotiators planned to give to Greece, and Ishtib, Kochana, and the neighboring areas, which were to go to Serbia, would be transferred to Bulgaria.

The Austrian plan was not successful because of the attitude of the other Powers. Russia offered some support, for she also wanted the friendship of Bulgaria, partly to have an ally on the route to Constantinople, partly in order that Austria should not appear to be the only friend of Bulgaria. However, although Russia would have been glad to deprive Greece of Kavalla for the benefit of Bulgaria, she was not willing to despoil Serbia, who would be most useful to hold Austria-Hungary in check. Even in the matter of Kavalla the Russians grew uncertain when they learned that their French allies desired that the port should go to Greece.

The French attitude was determined by two factors. France was anxious to build up an anti-Italian ally in Greece, and she observed with alarm the growing friendship between Greece and Germany which might draw Greece completely within the orbit of the Triple Alliance should Germany be able, single-handed, to secure Kavalla for Greece. It was, indeed, soon apparent that Germany had no intention of supporting the claims of Bulgaria to Kavalla, especially not at the expense of Greece.

The difference in opinion concerning the fate of Kavalla led, in the first week of August, 1913, to acrimonious conversa-

tions between Vienna and Berlin. Berchtold explained that he had already promised Kavalla to Bulgaria. The German government replied that it had promised Kavalla to Greece and that it would not alter its policy. Germany wished to bring Greece close to the Triple Alliance and Austria wished to pave the way for an alliance with Bulgaria. In view of the hostility between Bulgaria and Greece, the two objects were mutually exclusive.

The result of these differing opinions and of the rifts within both alliance groups was that when the peace was signed, Kavalla was left to Greece and Ishtib and Kochana to Serbia with no provision for the subsequent altering of any part of the treaty. Austria and Russia announced that they reserved the right to revise the decisions concerning Kavalla, but the effect of their declaration was weakened by the immediate publication of telegrams from the German emperor ostentatiously congratulating the king of Rumania on the signing of the peace. The Hungarian minister-president, Count Tisza, whose Magyar outlook made him more anti-Serbian than Count Berchtold, offered a belated plan according to which Austria-Hungary should buy Russian aid in bringing about revision by offering honest co-operation with Russia in her special interests in Bulgaria; but Berchtold did not adopt Tisza's suggestion.

The project in which Russia most desired Austrian support was the solution of the problem of Adrianople, the second of the difficulties arising from the Balkan Wars. Russia hoped to ingratiate herself with Bulgaria by expelling the Turks who had re-occupied Adrianople on July 20. She could attain this object only with the aid of all the Powers. Germany and France, however, because of their financial interests in Turkey, refused to participate in any strong measures against the Porte.

The first Russian plan for bringing Turkey to terms was a naval demonstration. Germany refused to join in a general action and France would not countenance the sending of Entente ships alone. A Russian suggestion for some sort of financial pressure on Turkey was equally unsuccessful. Finally, on August 7, a démarche of all the Powers was made in Constantinople urging the Turks to abide by the Treaty of London which had given Adrianople to Bulgaria. Turkey declined to yield. Instead of abandoning Adrianople, the Turkish government refused to see the activities

of an unofficial "special organization" which occupied posts on the right bank of the Maritza on the plea that the Moslem inhabitants of the region were being massacred by the Bulgarians. The Russian government was now more than ever alarmed. Since German opposition to naval or financial pressure continued, and since it was impossible to get even so much as another identic démarche at the Porte, the Russian ambassador finally, on August 20, without waiting for his colleagues, warned the grand vizier against further inroads on Bulgarian territory. The step was successful, for two days later the Turkish government declared formally that its troops had evacuated the west bank of the Maritza, adding, however, that having surrendered so much it would go no further, and that it would remain in control of Adrianople. Finally, abandoning all hope of recovering the city, Russia advised Bulgaria to negotiate with Turkey on the basis of the surrender of Adrianople to the Porte. On September 29, Bulgaria and Turkey signed the Treaty of Constantinople leaving Adrianople to Turkey.

Another particularly troublesome problem remaining from the Balkan Wars was that of Albania. The conference of ambassadors in London had roughly determined the boundaries of the new state and arranged for two international commissions to define the frontiers on the north and south, and for a third commission to assume temporary control of the government. The work of the boundary commissions was impeded by the friction within both groups between the representatives of the Triple Alliance and those of the Triple Entente, and by the efforts of both Serbia and Greece to make it appear that the territory investigated by the commissions was inhabited by their nationals. So great were these difficulties that the commission for the northern boundary had not yet completed its task when the war broke out in August, 1914. The work of the commission for the southern boundary was hastened by an ultimatum from Austria and Italy on October 30 declaring that if the commission could not present a final report by November 30, all areas still in dispute would be considered as belonging to Albania, and that the two Powers would insist on evacuation of all Albanian territory by Greek troops before December 31. The tension caused by this unexpected demand was eased by a British suggestion for a compromise line, which was accepted by all the Powers on December 13.

Once the boundary was determined, the evacuation of

southern Albania furnished occasion for further international friction. This question soon became involved with that of the Aegean islands. The Dodecanese had been seized by Italy during her war of 1911-1912 with Turkey, and the remaining islands had been occupied by Greece during the First Balkan War. Neither state had abandoned its conquests. Although England had no direct interest in Epirus, she was alarmed by the presence of Italy in the Aegean. Sir Edward Grey, the British foreign secretary, therefore, worked out a compromise which was expected to result in Italian evacuation of the islands in return for British aid to Austria and Italy for bringing about the immediate departure of Greek troops from Epirus. When the boundary commission for southern Albania completed its work in December, 1913, Sir Edward Grey made the following proposal:

1. Greece should be notified that she was expected to evacuate Epirus within a month.
2. Greece should be informed that with the exception of Imbros and Tenedos she might retain permanently the Aegean islands which she had in her possession, although she would have to give certain guarantees.
3. Turkey should be promised that the islands in Italian hands would be returned to her after an autonomous régime had been worked out for them.

Italy and Austria were glad to hasten the evacuation of Epirus, but they opposed giving the islands to Greece. Italy was particularly unwilling to make a declaration concerning the Dodecanese. The Powers of the Triple Alliance tried to divorce the first of the British proposals from the other two, but Sir Edward Grey refused to permit part of his plan to be carried out without the rest. He was also determined that Greece should be given a reasonable time in which to remove her troops, while Austria and Italy insisted upon ejecting the Greeks without further delay. So much time was consumed in settling these differences that it was not until April that the first two parts of Grey's plan could be put into effect. At that time Epirus was evacuated and Greece received a clear title to the islands. All subsequent Turkish attempts to recover them by threats or diplomacy were futile. Italy, however, remained in the Dodecanese, although England had attempted by granting concessions in Asia Minor to persuade her to leave the islands.

The most spectacular incident which resulted from the liquidation of the Balkan Wars was furnished by the evacuation of northern Albania. In the middle of August, Serbia made a pretense of abiding by the decision of the conference of ambassadors that she should give up at once, even before the exact boundary was fixed, the Albanian territory which she was occupying. By the end of August, however, it had become apparent that Serbian troops had not been entirely withdrawn. Berchtold attempted in vain to persuade the Powers to make a collective protest. Then in the middle of September, offering as an excuse an Albanian rising, but apparently hoping to force a boundary rectification in her own favor, Serbia reoccupied certain parts of Albania which she had previously relinquished. Again Berchtold was unsuccessful in getting diplomatic action to halt the Serbians, for none of the Powers would give him strong enough support. Russia was particularly obstinate and even Germany and Italy were hesitant. On October 1, Austria, acting alone, warned Serbia not to take forcible measures against Albania. The Serbian reply was considered unsatisfactory in Vienna.

Count Berchtold had now to determine how Austria could, without the help of the other Powers, bring Serbia to terms. He listened to many advisers and considered many policies before he put an end to two weeks of indecision by surprisingly sharp action against Serbia. A Serbian gesture for rapprochement with Austria, whether straightforward or not, won no acceptance in Austria. General Conrad, the Austrian chief-of-staff, argued that a radical solution of the Serbian problem should be attempted at once. Serbia should, he said, be offered a place in the Austro-Hungarian Empire similar to that occupied by Bavaria in the German Empire; if she refused it, she should be compelled by force of arms to accept it. Tisza, who opposed the incorporation of more Serbians in the empire, favored a diplomatic humiliation of Serbia by means of an ultimatum which, to be sure, might have to be followed by war, but which might also lead to a peaceful solution to the problem. Berchtold himself suggested occupying a few strategic points in Serbia and eventually effecting a slight reduction in Serbian territory. Against such a course Conrad protested. He preferred to do nothing at all and save the possibility of action until later rather than to ruin everything by half measures. The Emperor Francis Joseph, however, and also the heir to the throne,

Archduke Francis Ferdinand, found it impossible to support the views of Conrad.

Finally on October 14 Berchtold determined to follow the advice of Tisza, although he would not go as far as Conrad desired. The next day the Austrian representative in Belgrade pointed out to the Serbian government that even a temporary occupation of Albanian territory by Serbian troops was not in harmony with the conclusions of the conference of ambassadors which Austria had bound herself to uphold and asked whether Serbia was ready to recall within a specified and brief time the troops which she was reported to have in Albania. He made it clear that on Serbia's conduct in this matter would depend her future relations with the Monarchy. In this step Austria had the support of her allies, although neither of them had been given previous knowledge of it. The fact of German support is the more important because the German government was at once informed that in the event of further intransigence on the part of the Serbians, Austria was prepared to go to extreme lengths.

The Serbian reply to Austria was unsatisfactory, for the Serbian government declared that it would not evacuate Albania as long as armed bands were present there and as long as no boundary rectification had been granted. Thus it was apparent that the Serbian government was playing something of a game to get a more favorable boundary. Austria had already sacrificed more of Albania than she felt to be justified if Albania was to be an independent state. With the arguments of Conrad and Tisza before him and with the moral support of Germany, Berchtold now brought himself to take drastic action. On October 18 Austria presented to Serbia a note with an eight-day time limit demanding the withdrawal of Serbian troops from Albania and declaring that Austria would use "all proper means" to obtain fulfillment of the demand.

Here again the Austrian government had prompt and complete support from its allies. The members of the Triple Entente, although they deplored the Austrian action, did not offer any real support to Serbia. Consequently the Serbians were forced to give way. On October 25 the Serbian government announced that its troops had withdrawn behind the line established in London.

The incident had increased the antagonism between Austria and Russia, but it demonstrated the strength of German support for the Austrian claims in Albania. Perhaps the most important

result was the fact that the Austrian government had learned that ultimatums succeeded where the concert of Europe had failed, and that Germany would give support in the Balkans when war was distinctly possible.

Once Serbia and Greece had evacuated Albania, Austria and Italy began to quarrel over the little country. Italy had accomplished her purpose in Albania with the exclusion of Greece. Since she preferred that the new state should be weak enough to require Italian supervision, she was unwilling to support very energetically the German officer, Prince William of Wied, whom the Powers had selected as prince and who had taken office with the financial aid of Austria and Italy. The Austrians, on the other hand, who wanted Albania to be strong enough to be of assistance against Serbia, attempted to give real vitality to the government of the prince. There was sufficient trouble in Albania to offer occasion for dispute between the two Powers. In February when Greece agreed to abandon southern Albania, a revolt broke out in that region. The insurgents under the leadership of the former Greek cabinet member, Zographos, demanded the postponement of evacuation and a separate governor and gendarmerie for Epirus. In May when the Greek troops had been withdrawn, the Albanian commission of control met Zographos in Corfu and there negotiated an arrangement, not adopted until July, which granted virtual autonomy to Epirus. There was also a revolt in Durazzo which soon brought suspicion on Essad Pasha, the Albanian minister of war and the interior, who was arrested and exiled to Italy. The Italian government protested that Essad was innocent and that his downfall had been plotted by Austria, but Austria denied the charge. Other occasions for dispute were seized upon by both governments. None of these was of intrinsic importance and none led to a crisis, but they were evidence of the real hostility between Austria and Italy. The immediate result of the failure of Austria and Italy to co-operate was the weakening of Albania. When the war broke out in August, the little state collapsed and Prince William had to flee.

The problems left by the Balkan Wars were never entirely solved. The diplomacy concerning them had its importance, nevertheless. As a result of it the antagonism between the two alliance groups was increased. On the other hand, both groups had shown weaknesses within themselves. The strain was particularly

great between Austria and Italy. Although the unwillingness of France and Germany to follow their allies had on some occasions very important results, the solidarity of the alliances was still the more important factor. On the whole, German support of Austria had been more consistent than French support of Russia.

THE MISSION OF GENERAL LIMAN VON SANDERS

The most alarming episode of the period under consideration was the affair of General Liman von Sanders, the German officer who was invited to head a military mission to Turkey. Discouraged by their defeat in the Balkan Wars, the Turks decided early in 1913 to reorganize their fighting forces and generally to rehabilitate their country by seeking the aid of foreign experts. The gendarmerie was put into the hands of Frenchmen and the navy was intrusted to a British admiral. It was natural that German officers should be chosen to train the army, for German military advisers had already been employed for many years and German officers had served Turkey faithfully in the Balkan Wars. Although the plan for a military mission apparently originated in Turkey, the German government welcomed it in the hope that German firms might reap the incidental advantage of more numerous commercial contracts in the Ottoman Empire and that German military methods might recover the prestige lost through the poor showing of the German-trained Turkish army in the Balkan Wars. General Liman von Sanders was chosen as head of the mission and was promised wide supervisory powers including actual command of a model corps of troops to be stationed in Constantinople.

Neither Germany nor Turkey informed the other Powers of the exact nature of the negotiations between Von Sanders and the Turkish government. In November, 1913, however, rumors leaked out. There was great consternation, especially in Russia; for Russia did not want Turkey to be strong enough to oppose an eventual Russian attack on the Straits, nor was she willing to permit the extension of German influence in the Ottoman Empire. The Russian foreign office made repeated protests to Germany, especially against giving the actual command of troops into the hands of the German general. When Kokovtsov, Russian minister-president, paid a visit to Berlin in the middle of November, he also tried to persuade the German government to modify the mission. The Germans refused to give way before any of these protests.

The Russian government was unable to bring great pressure

to bear on Germany because of the attitude of the other members of the Triple Entente. The French were willing to support the Russian protests, but the British were not. The position of the British government was a delicate one. To the fact that a British officer was acting as adviser to the Turkish navy was added the further difficulty that on December 3 the sultan sanctioned a contract with the British firm of Armstrong according to which British capital was to be used to turn Ismid into a Turkish naval base. From the British point of view the only real objection to the German mission would lie in a possible German control of the Straits, and Sir Edward Grey soon learned that the Straits were to be outside the competency of General von Sanders. At first the British government was not inclined to take any action. When, however, Sazonov, the Russian foreign minister, pointed out the extreme importance of the matter to Russia, Grey offered him feeble support, always trying at the same time to conciliate Germany. Then as Grey learned one after another the facts of the British position in Turkey, he withdrew his support entirely.

At the end of December, the Russian government again sought the aid of France and England, this time with the object of making inquiries in Berlin to learn exactly what Germany intended to accomplish through the Sanders mission. Before they were willing to offer support in Berlin, both the French and British foreign offices insisted that the Russian government make clear exactly what was its minimum demand from Germany and what steps it proposed to take in the event that Germany refused that demand. Meantime, since Germany was anxious to relieve the tension if a solution could be found which did not constitute a real retreat before Russia, a compromise was offered from the German side. In the middle of January, following out a suggestion supported by the German foreign office, General von Sanders was promoted to a general inspectorship in the Turkish army and the actual command of troops passed automatically to a subordinate. Both military and political observers seemed to think, however, that Von Sanders had lost none of his important powers. On January 13, just as the compromise proposal became known in Russia, a ministerial conference was held to formulate an answer to the British and French question concerning the demands to be made from Germany. Here it was decided that it was best not to go to war over the Sanders question and that consequently it was

necessary to accept the German compromise arrangement at once.

On the surface the crisis was over. The results were, however, as interesting and complicated as the crisis itself.

In the first place, Sazonov attempted by suggesting a naval convention with England to strengthen the Entente so that it could not again display such weakness as it had revealed during the Sanders affair. Grey permitted conversations to be begun for the negotiation of a convention. When, however, rumors of the conversations reached the German foreign office, which allowed the German press to publish the fact that negotiations were in progress, Grey denied that any naval agreement with Russia existed or was likely to exist. The publicity thus given to the affair slowed down the progress of the negotiations and they were still in their early stages when the war broke out.

To undo the results of the mission as far as Russia was concerned, Sazonov also tried in vain to prevent the expansion of the Turkish Black Sea fleet. He attempted with only partial success to stop the French loans which enabled Turkey to buy ships under construction in England. The French government had signed a secret convention with Germany on February 15, 1914, which gave French financiers the right to build railroads in northern Anatolia and Syria and which transferred into French hands a large block of Imperial Ottoman bonds and thus increased French interest in the Ottoman Public Debt. France was, therefore, in no mood to interfere with the economic development of Turkey, and French funds were poured with little abatement into the Turkish treasury for use in the purchase of ships.

While Sazonov was trying to defeat the naval plans of Turkey he was also laying the basis for a stronger Russian force in the Black Sea, which could eventually be used for the seizure of the Straits. On December 6 at the high point of the Sanders crisis, he took the first step by making a long report to the czar summarizing the whole Near-Eastern situation. He spoke of the instability in the Balkans resulting from the Peace of Bucharest and pointed out that although Russia herself had no desire to acquire more territory and wished above all things for the maintenance of peace, she might well be drawn into a Balkan conflict which would open for her the historic question of the Straits. From the Russian point of view, Turkey was, Sazonov declared, the most desirable guardian of the Straits - unable to threaten Russia

and always under the necessity of consulting Russian wishes. It would be impossible for Russia to sit passively by and watch any stronger Power seize the Straits. At this particular moment, however, even the relations with Turkey were not as they should be. The latest reports indicated that from 1914 to 1916 Turkey would have more ships in the Black Sea than Russia. Such a situation Russia could not tolerate. Sazonov believed that the political outlook demanded that Russia should prepare herself at once for military action at the Straits by a general program to be undertaken jointly by all departments. Specifically, the quick development of a landing force, an improved method of mobilization, the increasing of the Black Sea fleet to outnumber the Turkish and to be able, in conjunction with the army, to force the Straits, and the bringing of the means of transportation into right relation with the landing force seemed to be the problems at hand.

On February 21, 1914, a ministerial conference was held to discuss the suggestions of Sazonov. All the members agreed that it was out of the question to allow the seizure of the Straits by any country other than Russia, and that Russia herself could seize them only in case of a general European war. In preparation for a general conflict which would permit an attack on the Straits, it was decided to make possible the acceleration of mobilization by the acquisition of many small ships and by the building of more railways in the Caucasus. The Black Sea fleet was to be expanded as rapidly as possible, perhaps by purchase abroad as well as by building at home.

The tzar gave his entire approval to these recommendations. On March 30 the duma voted one hundred and ten million rubles for developing the Black Sea fleet, only twenty-five millions being authorized for 1914.

One further result of the Sanders mission was a Russian attempt in the spring of 1914 to increase economic control over Turkey so that Russia would be in a better position to profit by the eventual collapse of the Ottoman Empire. At the same time the Turks, who had found themselves somewhat isolated in their struggle to keep some of the Aegean islands, had determined to come to a more friendly understanding with Russia. Sazonov did not refuse the Turkish gestures of friendship, but while he was accepting them he continued his other plans. The Ottoman Public Debt and actually the whole of Turkish financial policy had long

been controlled by an international commission with two French members and one each from Great Britain, Germany, Austria, Italy, and Turkey. Although Russian holdings in the debt were small, Sazonov now tried to get a seat on the commission for a Russian member. In this effort he was unsuccessful because Germany demanded a second German member as her price for permitting the appointment of a Russian, and France refused to sanction the creating of another seat for Germany. At the same time Sazonov tried to gain for Russian capital a large place in the control of the Austrian-owned Saloniki Bank which had branches throughout the Ottoman Empire. In this latter endeavor he might have been successful had not the war come when it did.

The Sanders mission thus had important results. It had emphasized the fundamental antagonism between Russia and Germany and had made more complete the dependence of Turkey on Germany. Partly because of the mission, Russia increased her forces in the Black Sea and tried to prevent the increase of those of Turkey, meantime doing all in her power to extend Russian economic influence in Turkey. She attempted to strengthen the bonds which united her with England in order that the Entente might be more effective in another time of stress. The importance of these results is only minimized by the fact that the war came too soon to allow their full realization.

THE PROBLEM OF THE BALANCE OF POWER
IN THE BALKANS

A most important if unspectacular development in the Balkans in the period under consideration was the effort of both alliance groups to bring about a change in the balance of power in the Balkan peninsula. It was natural that Austria and Germany should attempt in the period after the Balkan Wars to restore their lost position in the Balkans. They were alarmed by the attempts of Russia to detach Rumania completely from the Triple Alliance and to build a Russophil bloc of Balkan states including Serbia, Greece, and Rumania. They were not, however, agreed upon the method to be followed. Germany desired not only to maintain the relationship between the Triple Alliance and Rumania but also to draw closer to Greece. Austria, on the other hand, distrusted the Rumanian alliance, which had, indeed, shown indications of weakness. Because of the Serb-Greek alliance she also distrusted Greece. Many Austrian statesmen would have preferred to abandon the Rumanian alliance for one with Bulgaria, hoping at the same time to bring Bulgaria and Turkey closer together.

At the very beginning of the period under consideration the search for allies was already in progress. In September and October, 1913, when Greece and Bulgaria were settling their difficulties with Turkey, the Austrian government struggled to bring about a rapprochement between Bulgaria and Turkey, only to meet overwhelming opposition from Germany and Rumania. Austria had to be content with the signing of the treaty of peace at the end of September which left Adrianople to Turkey. Turco-Bulgarian alliance negotiations were continued until the outbreak of the World War, but they were never successful. Germany on her part sought a rapprochement between Greece and Turkey, but without success because of the difficulty of disposing of the Aegean islands and because of lack of support from Austria. The conflicting instructions sent by the German and Austrian governments to their representatives in Turkey showed very clearly the fact that Berlin and Vienna were not entirely at one in their policies.

Much more important than the futile negotiations with Greece and Bulgaria were the efforts of both alliance groups to win the friendship of Rumania. The ties which bound Rumania to the Triple Alliance were not overstrong. The fact of the Austro-Rumanian treaty had never been published and even in Rumanian official circles it was known only to a very few people. Although King Carol's Hohenzollern blood led him to be friendly toward Germany and Austria, growing nationalism was arousing among his subjects increased opposition toward Hungary because of the Hungarian treatment of the Rumanian population in Transylvania. So pro-Russian had the Rumanian people become by the end of 1913 that Rumanian, Austrian, and German statesmen were all doubtful whether Rumanian soldiers would march with those of the Triple Alliance in case of war.

In Austria, opinion was divided as to the best policy to pursue toward Rumania. Francis Ferdinand and to some extent Count Berchtold preferred to draw closer to Rumania, but Tisza, because of his difficulty with the Rumanian nationals living in Hungary, wished to replace the Rumanian alliance by a Bulgarian.

For a time Berchtold followed a pro-Bulgarian policy. In October and November, 1913, he made several efforts to persuade the German government to look with favor on a friendship with Bulgaria. The Germans insisted, however, on clinging to the relationship with Rumania which was incompatible with an understanding with Bulgaria.

Unable to draw closer to Bulgaria, the Austrian government attempted to improve its relations with Rumania. Berchtold's ultimate object was to bring about the publication of the treaty with Rumania. To prepare the way he sent Count Ottokar Czernin as minister to Bucharest. Czernin was a person in whom Berchtold had great confidence, and because he had written in condemnation of the Magyar policy toward the Rumanian subjects of the Monarchy, he was expected to be persona grata in Rumania. At the same time Tisza entered into negotiations with the Rumanians in Transylvania to see whether it would not be possible to satisfy their demands.

At once Czernin began to despatch pessimistic reports to his government explaining again and again the fact that concessions to the Rumanians in Transylvania were of the utmost importance. With the greatest personal regret King Carol informed him that unless such concessions were made, there could be no possi-

bility that Rumanian armies would march with those of the Hapsburgs in case of war, and it would be very difficult to keep them from joining with Austria's enemies.

By February Tisza's negotiations with the Rumanians of Transylvania had failed. At once anti-Hungarian propaganda in Rumania increased. The League of Culture, an organization to stimulate a greater national consciousness in Rumania, was reorganized into a more militant body. There were anti-Austrian demonstrations in all sorts of public places. Nor were Czernin's efforts to win over King Carol to a plan for publishing the treaty more successful. The king listened to his suggestions without any great interest. Berchtold himself was not anxious to take any very radical steps, and after some warnings from Berlin he began to curb his enthusiastic minister.

Part of this failure was due to the fact that Russia was at the same time making a determined effort to bring Rumania into the Entente camp. In his memorandum of December 6, 1913, to the czar, Sazonov had made it clear that it was a matter of great importance that Rumania should fight on the side of Russia when that general war should occur which would permit Russia to attack the Straits. "Here lies clearly the duty of our diplomacy," he said, "to make favorable preparations for as close as possible a friendship with Rumania. This undertaking must be continued uninterruptedly and with wisdom." He also wished a reconciliation between Bulgaria and Serbia.

In pursuance of this policy Russia and France attempted through their diplomatic agents in Bucharest and through private organizations, to win over Rumanian public opinion to the Entente. The Rumanian crown prince and his family visited Russia in March. In June the czar, accompanied by Sazonov, visited the Rumanian royal family at Constanza. During the visit King Carol was made a field-marshal in the Russian army. When the czar returned to Russia, Sazonov went on to Bucharest. There he obtained the assurance that Rumania was not obligated to take part in any war except one in which her own interests were vitally concerned. He asked what would be the Rumanian attitude in case of an armed conflict between Russia and Austria if Russia was forced to begin the war. To this question he received an indecisive reply. The visit was also marked by two other incidents. Sazonov joined the Rumanian minister-president, Bratianu, in warning the Porte

against closing the Straits in the event of a Turkish war against Greece over the question of the islands. This action presented the world with a clear indication of a closer relation between Rumania and Russia. Then the two ministers took a brief motor trip into Transylvania which aroused much bitter feeling in Hungary.

Thus as the first months of 1914 wore on, it became apparent to the statesmen of Austria-Hungary that they could not expect improved relations with Rumania and that they must rest their policy on some other basis. Tisza in a memorandum dated March 15 suggested that Austria would have to adopt a politique de longue main. This would probably involve an alliance with Bulgaria, and patient effort on the part of Austria and Germany to persuade Rumania to accept that alliance. The official memoranda show that during the next months the policy suggested by Tisza was further developed in the foreign office.

The most important evidence of the new policy was seen in a loan which Austria persuaded Germany to grant to Bulgaria in June. The financial situation of Bulgaria was desperate and the loan was a matter of the first importance. At the request of Russia the French government had banned all Bulgarian loans from the French market. Austria now saw an opportunity to improve relations with Bulgaria if the money could be found in Germany. Savinsky, the new Russian minister in Sofia, worked frantically to get the loan placed in France, but since Russia did not trust the Bulgarian government and since France and Russia differed as to the conditions under which a loan could be granted, the half-hearted efforts of the two governments to prevent the finding of money in Germany did not result in success. A German loan was finally arranged with such terms that Germany gained considerable economic advantage in Bulgaria.

The positions of Rumania and Bulgaria in the European alignment were not yet clear in July, 1914. Nobody could predict how either of the small states would act in the crisis. Certain tendencies were, however, fairly well marked. The hostility between Bulgaria and Rumania had continued. Rumania was drifting slowly but certainly away from the Triple Alliance and into the camp of the Entente. Of this fact Berchtold was well aware when he came to make the momentous decision for peace or war with Serbia. There seemed to him no possibility, however, that the

Russian alliance would grow more secure with time. Bulgaria, on the other hand, was more closely connected with the Triple Alliance by financial ties, and to some extent by common political interest than she had been before, and there was considerable reason to suppose that she would join the Triple Alliance in any general war. The gradual and quiet shifting of Rumania from a policy in general friendly toward the Triple Alliance to one friendly to the Entente was one of the most momentous developments of the year 1913-1914. By June, 1914, it was Austria, not Russia, who had to plan to leave troops on her border as a protection against Rumania.

Meantime, during the spring of 1914, Serbia was passing more completely under the influence of the Entente, and Austrian statesmen had to think more seriously than ever of the serious import of the growing power and the increasing hostility of the little state.

In relation to Serbia the most important problem was that of a possible union between Serbia and Montenegro. The financial situation of the Montenegrin government was so desperate and the unpopularity of the reigning house, especially of the heir to the throne, was so great, that it seemed impossible to preserve the independence of the little country. There was much talk of union with the kindred people of Serbia, and in the spring of 1914 King Nicholas of Montenegro actually discussed a partial union. Austria and Italy opposed such a change, but they could not act together to prevent it because they could not agree about the stronghold of Lovchen. Austria wished to acquire Lovchen later, but Italy was unwilling, because of its importance in controlling the Adriatic, to allow it to fall into Austrian hands. Russia desired the Serbo-Montegrin union and carefully avoided putting any obstacles in the way of it, but she did not encourage it for fear of offending Austria. She did, however, although without success, encourage the Powers to make a loan to Montenegro. She also contemplated a subsidy to the Montenegrin army. Before the Balkan Wars, Russia had given aid to the Montenegrin army, but the custom had been abandoned during the wars. The possibility of again sending aid was thoroughly discussed in Russian official circles in the early months of 1914, but the war broke out before a decision was reached.

There were also more tangible evidences of a closer relation between Serbia and the Entente. Loans were made by France

to Serbia and Greece. At some inconvenience to herself Russia arranged to sell military equipment to Serbia. The Serbian and Greek minister-presidents and the Serbian crown prince were simultaneously received in Russia. A marriage between the Serbian crown prince and the eldest daughter of the tsar was discussed at that time.

Whenever possible Austria or Italy put difficulties in the way of Serbia. An arrangement between Serbia and Greece for a special Serbian trade outlet in Saloniki was upset by Austrian and Italian demands for similar treatment. There was also the troublesome question of what should be done with those parts of the Oriental Railway which passed through the new territories of Serbia. Controlling interest in the road had previously been in Austrian hands. French bankers arranged that the railway should be purchased by an international consortium. The Serbians did not, however, like the conditions under which the purchase was to be made. Italy also objected because she was given no share in the road, and Germany protested against the ownership of a section of the Berlin-to-Bagdad Railway by an international company. Finally Austria agreed that Serbia might purchase the line if she bought all necessary railway materials from Austria. To this scheme the French objected. Negotiations for the sale continued, however, but they were interrupted by the war.

With the Serbian situation as it was, and with the shift in the Rumanian position, it was thus apparent that the Austrian hope for a Balkan bloc consisting of Bulgaria, Rumania, and Turkey had faded into impossibility, while the Russian plan for a group consisting of Rumania, Serbia, and Greece, seemed likely to succeed.

CONCLUSION

The assassination of the heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne produced the crisis of July, 1914, first, because Austrian statesmen believed that, could they assure themselves of the support of Germany, the humiliation of Serbia was worth the risk of war; and second, because Russian statesmen believed that it was necessary to prevent the defeat of Serbia even at the cost of war.

The situation of Austria was indeed desperate. The whole history of the eleven months under consideration indicates that the greatest external obstacle to the work of the Hapsburgs in putting their own house in order was the irredentist movement in Rumania and more especially in Serbia. With the exception of the mission of General Liman von Sanders and the question of the islands, each of the problems considered in this study would have been solved more easily or altogether avoided had Austria not feared the predatory tendencies of Serbia.

None of Berchtold's efforts to check Serbia directly or to alter the balance of power in the Balkans to Serbian disadvantage had been truly successful. The ultimatum of October had delayed Serbia's further advance, but it had not reduced her in size or strength. Albania, the sole barrier to Serbian access to the sea, continually gave new indications of weakness. It was apparent that Serbia would eventually reach the Adriatic by means of a union with Montenegro. Austrian allies in the Balkans, instead of becoming more staunch and numerous, were falling away. Rumania was virtually lost and the alliance with Bulgaria had not yet been secured. Because of German distrust of the Bulgarian government and because of the strong sympathies of the Emperor William for Greece, Berchtold had not been able to enlist the aid of Germany in developing a new Balkan bloc to include Bulgaria. He must have felt that he had exhausted every power of diplomacy and that only by recourse to the sword could Austria hope to prevent Serbia from assimilating the South Slavs of the Monarchy.

If war was inevitable, it was best for Austria that it should come soon. As long as King Carol lived, it was possible

that he might preserve Rumanian neutrality even if he could not actively join his allies. Serbia would naturally grow stronger as she consolidated the gains from the Balkan Wars. Since hope had to be abandoned that the situation of Austria would improve, while there was every reason to believe that it would grow worse, it is not difficult to explain why Berchtold should have turned to his German ally in July, 1914, with proposals for the elimination of Serbia as an active factor in Balkan politics.

He had reason to hope for German aid. Germany had, in the Sanders affair developed further her own cause for hostility to Russia. Then there was the incident of October to look back upon when Germany had accepted and supported an unexpected ultimatum against Serbia. Germany had differed from Austria in regard to relations with Greece and Bulgaria, but in the more important questions of Serbia and Albania she had been a faithful ally.

For Russia, July, 1914, was not the most opportune moment for fighting. That she did not want war at that time was indicated by the fact that she did not make the erecting of Albania an occasion for it. She could wish to defer the war until her armaments had reached full strength. On the other hand she dared not sit by and watch the defeat of Serbia, her one reliable friend in the Balkans. She could hope for the neutrality and perhaps even the aid of Rumania. Relations with Turkey had improved somewhat and Bulgaria was not yet in the opposite camp. The events of 1913-1914 had shown the Russian government that Serbia must be the corner-stone of any Balkan bloc it could build, and consequently Russia had to fight for the salvation of Serbia. She hoped also that the war would solve the question of the Straits in her favor.

Given the inciting incident of the assassination of Francis Ferdinand, it is easy to see why Austria and Russia found themselves engaged in war at the end of July, 1914.

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